

26 & 27 February 2007

Apex International Hotel, Edinburgh

Approach to minutes: the minutes do not attempt to capture every point made, but they provide a summary of what the discussions covered and they provide a record of required action points.

Terminology in this paper

ODI=Office for Disability Issues

Members = Members Equality 2025

Attendees: Clenton Farquharson, Simone Aspis, Richard Rieser, Eleanor Thoe Lisney, Michelle Daley, Kirsten Hearn, Shelley Franklin, Prabhat Barot, Alex Thorburn, Rowen Jade, Fiona Wallace, Tara Flood, Katherine Thomas, Zara Todd, Dave McCormick, Sarah Newman, Steve Scott, Haji Saghir Alam, Andy Rickell, Miro Griffith and Nick Danagher

ODI Officials: Bruce Calderwood, Sally Witcher, Jacinda

Humphrey, Menghi Mulchandani, Celia Reed

Secretariat: Wilma Jackson, Carol Foster-Middleton, Audrey Daft, Steve Frost and Chris Manasseh.

Apologies: None

Monday 26 February 2007

1. Agenda, minutes of last meeting and matters arising.

1.1 Richard welcomed the members and said he and Kirsten would both facilitate the meeting.

1.2 The minutes (paper EQ2025/0202) were checked page by page for accuracy. The only corrections were to the spelling of Nick Danagher's name, and to include page numbers. The minutes were then accepted as an accurate record.

1.3 Matters arising were then considered - members asked for a copy of the booklet recommended by Sean Lusk as part of his presentation about working with Government. The Secretariat had sent this out in a newsletter, but it can be

sent again.

Action point: Secretariat to resend.

Geographical areas to be covered by members are to be mapped out.

Action Point: Map to be circulated to members.

Action Point: Members to decide who will cover areas not already covered.

1.4 Recruitment: Ten interviews for the Northern Ireland Reserved post will be held on 5 & 6 March 2007, in Belfast and recommendations for appointment will then be submitted to Anne McGuire.

The post for a member from the Deaf community is currently being advertised. The closing date has been extended until the 27 April 2007 to allow time for a British Sign Language DVD to be produced.

1.5 It was suggested that it would be useful to circulate the British Sign Language contact list.

Action Point: Secretariat to circulate the list to members

1.6 Some members had still to send in pen pictures of

themselves to the secretariat.

Action Point: Secretariat to circulate full list of what is needed.

Action point: Members to provide missing pen pictures and “What you need to know about me” details (including information about their access requirements).

Action point: once all have been received, the secretariat will circulate them to members

1.7 The issue of the signing ceremony for the UN Convention in New York on the 30 March was raised. Members felt it was important that it was signed, so the UK would be part of the first round of negotiations. This was the first stage on intention to ratify. The stage after that, ratification, would bring process into law and this would take a few more years after signing. It was felt if the United Kingdom was not there at start it would be unlikely to get a place on the international committee.

1.8 The members said they felt the main document and the protocols should be signed up to. This was voted on and it was agreed unanimously. Office for Disability Issues staff advised that the Cabinet Office had decided on the 11

December to take the matter to a committee of Ministers [called the Domestic Affairs (Communities) Committee] for approval. This would happen very shortly and until then, it is not known if it will be signed and under which terms. Office for Disability Issues staff agreed they would take away the feelings of the members that both the main document and the protocols should be signed up to. **Action point: Office for Disability Issues staff to take Equality 2025 views to Minister.**

2. Children and Young People

2.1 The thrust of the paper was agreed in principle, with members to:

- a) Use existing organisations to do this work; and
- b) Work with Council of Disabled Children to engage with children.

2.2 It was recommended that consultation with Children and Young People should be based on the following principles:

- a) To be led by disabled children and young people?; and
- b) Involve disabled adults in the planning.
- c) Where non-disabled people are involved they must form partnerships with disabled people and the disabled children and young people must be in the majority;
- d) The purpose is not to just consult but to empower disabled children and young people;
- e) And should be based on the social model of disability;
- f) Engagement and forums for children need to be separate from those with parental responsibility;
- g) The consultation should include disabled children and young people from all parts of the UK;
- h) The consultation process should include Children and Young People with a full range of impairments;
- i) And Include black and ethnic children and young people and other marginalized groups;
- j) And must meet all participants access needs;
- k) National and regional forums should be established for children and young people aged 8-24;
- l) Have two residential meetings a year;
- m) Encourage local authorities to set up forums in their areas;

- n) Use other means to contact children and young people such as questionnaires;
- o) Have a Disability Culture week in every school;
- p) Use existing parent networks; and
- q) Have regular regional and country training for parents and carers.

2.3 It was also felt that sport and television soaps could be used as vehicle for effective engagement.

2.4 Office for Disability Issues staff suggested the group considered how far the group's proposals align with Council for Disabled Children proposals and what the potential was for an integrated process.

2.5 Summing up, it was acknowledged that the proposals had not been agreed as such with the Council for Disabled Children but the thrust of the proposals was clear. The Council's views are trusted by Department of Health ? and Department for Education and Skills and they want to work with Equality 2025. They planned to use the money they have from True Colour Trust for a three year project for this purpose. More money will be needed however for regional

and national arrangements for possibly 26 meetings a year. One clear issue was funding which will need to be arranged but some arrangements in place in Wales, funded by Comic Relief, could be built on. This would develop a national approach through the work of the Council for Disabled Children. Organisations like Whizz Kids also have extensive networks that could be worked with.

2.6 It was agreed that consultation fatigue is an issue therefore, it was important to have a national structure to plug into these arrangements rather than setting up separate forums.

2.7 It is not proposed to rely solely on meetings with children and young people but to consider setting up a national website or chat room, some of which already exists. It was also felt the use of sport and television was a good idea and it may be possible to link this to the run up to the Olympics in London.

2.8 Mainstreaming arrangements were important and it was planned that non disabled friends could also participate. Parents' views were likely to come from other forums and

this work was focussed on getting young people's views.

2.9 The proposal was that, if the Members agreed with the general principles, another meeting of the small group would be used to incorporate these suggestions. The aim would be to get a better understanding from the Council for Disabled Children and others about what they can bring to the proposals and also what the Government can offer.

2.10 It was felt that the paper be slightly revised by the sub-group to make it:

- More persuasive to prove the effectiveness of the proposals and convince Government that they added value.
- Clear that it wasn't reproducing things that were already out there,
- Provide more concrete proposals on how Members were going to utilise existing work already taking place by other organisations.

2.11 Therefore the plan was to work up a detailed proposal and bring that to the March meeting.

Action point: - Equality 2025 Members sub group on Children and Young People issues

2.12 The group asked the Secretariat to look at the proposals and offer pointers on how they could be enhanced.

3. Shared values statement – Paper EQ2025/02/04

3.1 The paper was discussed to consider and make any changes before it would be adopted:

(i) It was apparent that the wording in the Values Paper 2.1c and the draft Memorandum of Understanding paragraph 3.8 did not mirror each other eg: In partnership with Government.

3.2 It was suggested the document be agreed in principle apart from part 2.1(c) and that Office for Disability Issues staff work with Kirsten and Richard to develop a draft for agreement the next day The Members voted on this proposal and it was agreed.

Day Two 27th February 2007

4. Jacinda Humphry joined the meeting, introducing herself as a Deputy Director of the Office for Disability Issues, in charge of strategy, and explaining she was there to develop her relationship with Equality 2025.

5. Report from the closed meeting

5.1 It was agreed in the closed meeting the need for support and supportive technology for the members as they were finding the number of documents difficult to manage. Each Member has agreed to complete a questionnaire for access needs, which they will forward to the Secretariat.

Action Point: Kirsten, Eleanor and Zara to draw up a questionnaire

5.2 Members need to know what is occurring to enable them to flag items for future agendas.

Action Point: All members to feed future events into the facilitators who will share this with the Secretariat at

their regular meetings. Ongoing

5.3 Timing and content of meetings: Members felt it was too soon to hold quarterly meetings so they will keep to monthly meetings in order to get through the work which needs to be done.

5.4 Members will continue to have closed sessions and these would be 2 hours for a 2 day meeting and 1 hour for a 1 day meeting. It was recognised this sounded quite a lot of time but it was felt that these were helpful in allowing the open meeting to be more fluid.

6.0 Values Paper

6.1 It was agreed that paragraph 2.1.C be changed as this did not include the role of Government. The new paragraph is to read 'Will ensure a network driven and controlled by disabled people in partnership with the Government.'

6.2 The Values paper was then agreed by all members.

7.0 Office of Disability Issues staff responded to the members' request from the closed session for more technical Information Technology support. Although it was understood this would be very helpful, but there are some things that the Department for Work and Pensions would not be able to provide, due to the processes of procurement.

Action point: The Secretariat and the Office for Disability Issues will look at the requests to see what can be done.

7.1 With regard to the agenda for meetings, it was understood the need for Equality 2025 Members to know what was on the horizon and the Secretariat will set up processes to alert them to information received from the Office for Disability Issues and other areas of Government. This would help the members to better forward planning their work.

7.2 It was acknowledged that monthly meetings leave the Secretariat very little time to get papers to Members especially in alternative formats. It was suggested that the Members consider 6 weekly meetings in the future.

7.3 It was proposed by Members that the deadline for

circulating papers be extended by 3 days for the next meeting. This would still mean Members had two weekends to look at papers. This was agreed.

8.0 Forum on Devolved Administrations

8.1 Members were updated on the roles of Katherine, Alex and Prabat within the Devolved Administrations sub group. They were in the process of compiling a draft paper describing their role within their countries and how they differed administratively from each other and England. It was proposed that this paper remain in draft until the appointment of the Northern Ireland Member, who would then be given an opportunity to have an input to this paper.

8.2 Each Member from the Devolved Administrations were representing countries which were different socially, economically and culturally. They agreed that each reserved position member was there to:

- (i) Ensure a voice on Equality2025 for each devolved country
- (ii) Champion issues in the United Kingdom and devolved countries

(iii) Build a relationship to influence changes within the devolved countries

8.3 They also agreed that:

(i) The reserved appointees should not normally serve on more than two sub groups because of their additional responsibilities.

(ii) They would aim to sit on different sub groups to each other for maximum coverage and each would look at the devolved issues for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

(iii) They would take up issues within the United Kingdom and devolved countries.

(iv) with regard to the Workplan they should take responsibility for an additional issue as well as the devolved issue.

(v) They will support each other and, to ensure there is an area of expertise for those people serving on other sub groups, they will set up a forum where they can discuss things and be available to advise other sub groups on devolved issues. Notes to be available.

8.4 It was proposed that there should be a standing item in the Newsletter on the Devolved Administrations. This was

agreed.

8.5 It was also suggested there should be a standing item on the agenda for any key issues from the Devolved Administrations. This was agreed.

9.0 User Led Organisations (ULOs)

9.1 The paper on User Led Organisations was presented and the need that each locality should have a User Led Organisation for Independent Living. The sub group looked at the term 'User Led Organisations.' They were not happy with the term, because 'user' generally means health and care users and this restricts who is covered.

9.2 Two papers had been drafted and it was requested that they be amalgamated into one paper. Members also asked that the definition of User Led Organisations be specified to enable effective use of Centres for Independent Living and if they could invite Jane Campbell to come and speak to Equality 2025

Action Point: Rowen offered to distribute an easy read summary of Jane Campbell's consultation

9.3 Office for Disability Issues staff said the Department of Health, with Lis Robinson (ODI), are looking at identifying Centres for Independent Living.

Action Point: Lis Robinson to contact the sub-group.

9.4 It was emphasised that in order to communicate policy recommendations on Centres for Independent Living to Government, they should ensure they are clear. It was suggested that it might be helpful to look at some examples of how others do this.

Action Point: Secretariat to contact the Secretary of the Disability Employment Advisory Committee and request permission to send to Members one of their advisory notes and their 'project proforma' setting out what to think about when starting a project.

9.5 Members agreed to:

1. Sharpen up the paper
2. Include significant concerns about the way the DoH are interpreting Centres for Independent Living
3. Co-ordinate with other bodies and inform the Secretariat of other organisations.

10. The changes to the **Memorandum of Understanding** (MOU) were discussed. However due to the accessibility of the changes to the paper some of the members did not think it was appropriate at this time. It was agreed after discussion that;

Action Points:

- **Steve Scott will work with Richard, Kirsten, Rowan, and Andy and will coordinate comments from those and other members**
- **He will work with Carol, further redrafting the Memorandum of Understanding if necessary.**
- **Carol will summarise the key proposed changes She will produce the document in accessible formats (and discuss particular needs with Simone and Fiona)**

11.0 Work Programme

11.1 It was proposed that subgroups would be set up on

1. Independent Living/family support
2. Early Years, education, Children and Young People, transitions
3. Employment and benefits

4. Older People
5. Management (include devolved issues)
6. Media
7. Working with government, devolved administration, and other organisations
8. Engaging with hard to reach diverse communities
9. Rights, justice and citizenship
10. Health

The subgroups would be ongoing, though it was recognised that it would be important to prioritise and to ensure that there was enough flexibility to set up short-term project groups when these were needed. Members would each belong to a maximum of three groups (devolved administration representatives belonging to two groups).

11.2 It was agreed these sub groups would need to link with other government departments such as Transport, Home Office and Education, through the Secretariat and the Office for Disability Issues. The sub-group areas could form a framework for engaging disabled people and for the Office for Disability Issues to trawl government departments for issues they might want to bring to Equality 2025. The subgroup framework might also form the basis for the

Strategic Plan.

11.3 It was acknowledged that some sub groups will need to be 'time-based pieces of work'.

Action Points:

- All Members to identify which sub group they are interested in, in order of preference ie: 1,2,3. and let Kirsten know.**
- Members to identify sub groups and who is on them, and who has lead responsibility by next meeting. (Sarah to lead coordinate)**
- The subgroups could each consider a) what needs to be done in that area (if anything) during the period of the interim work-plan and b) identify whether there were priority issues falling under the subgroup heading which needed to go into the work-plan from July 2007.**

12.0 Budget

The budget costs were discussed briefly, it was agreed the spreadsheet would be shared with Members.

Action Point: Secretariat to bring to next meeting.

13.0 Working Together

13.1 Paper 1 EQ2025/02/08 - agreed

13.2 It was also agreed that Members hold a card up if they needed clarification of a point.

Action Point: Secretariat to obtain indicator cards for next meeting.

13.3 Leadership

(i) Members agreed to have two facilitators at any one time (one male, one female), and facilitators would each facilitate for 4 months before being replaced by other Equality 2025 members.

(ii) Between meetings, liaison with the Secretariat and other Office for Disability Issues staff, will continue to be through the facilitators.

(iii) Facilitators will meet the Minister every 3 months on a regular basis so that over a period of time most Members would meet the Minister.

13.4 Additionally, the Ministerial Group may want to meet representatives of Equality 2025.

13.5 Forward plan

- (i) Consider inviting Ministerial Group, including Anne McGuire and Ivan Lewis, for an informal meeting with Equality 2025 Members, over lunch.
- (ii) Consider inviting experts to speak at Equality 2025 meetings. Someone from the geographical area where meetings are being held, or on a particular subject.

13.6 Discipline

Action Point: Kirsten to establish complaints or grievance procedure against an Equality 2025 Member.

This is detailed in the Memorandum of Understanding

Action Point: Secretariat to send these to Kirsten.

13.7 Communication

Members need to look at communications, how we communicate. It was expressed, however, that it may be difficult to have a separate web-site for Equality 2025 following the Varney report, which was looking at closing many government websites due to the confusing number already in existence.

Action Points:

- Secretariat to bring Information Technology options to next meeting.

- Eleanor to explore a possible solution and update at next meeting.
- Wilma suggested members create their own Equality 2025 e-mail address if they didn't want Equality 2025 communications to go to their own e-mail account.
- Kirsten to co-ordinate protocols for e-mail use eg: 'e-mail rules'

14.0 Dates for next meetings

20th and 21st March – Birmingham

24th and 25th April – Manchester

16th and 17th May – Leeds ?

20th and 21st June – Venue to be arranged

24th and 25th July – Venue to be arranged

23rd and 24th August – Venue to be arranged

25th and 26th September – Venue to be arranged

14.1 It was agreed to continue to hold two day meetings, as there was still much to cover. It was requested if speakers were invited they should be pre and not post dinner, to

recognise member's energy and fatigue levels.

14.2 Outline agenda for next meeting

- (i) Work Programme update
- (ii) Performance Indicators
- (iii) Memorandum Of Understanding
- (iv) UN Convention
- (v) How we work together (IT communication)
- (vi) Devolved Administration update
- (vii) Nominations for next female chair

15.0 External Communications

Need for lines to take.

Branding required, this links with Department for Work and Pensions funding a website.

Action Point: Wilma to check with Department for Work and Pensions for possible assistance.

It was suggested by Officials that Members could use other people's conferences as a means of reaching disabled people. This included the ODI's forthcoming consultation events on indicators of disability

Action point: it was agreed that an Equality 2025 member

would speak at each of the indicators events and take the opportunity to ask disabled people attending about priorities for Equality 2025's work plan.

16.0 AOB

Shelley to attend Mind Conference.

Feed back required from Members – are we getting the right level of detail in the minutes.

(i) Minutes to be posted on the Office for Disability Issues shared IT area

(ii) European Year of Equal Opportunity – what is UK Government/Office for Disability Issues doing?

Action Point: Jacinda will check and feedback to the next meeting.